

July 22, 2004

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to add my voice to the growing number of groups and individuals **opposed** to efforts by the local Bell telephone companies to circumvent current rules on calls placed with a pre-paid calling card. If they succeed, it will result in higher rates – in many cases, dramatically higher rates – for consumers who place the calls. As you approach your work on this docket, I implore you to keep the needs of consumers in mind rather than the pleadings of the four Bell companies.

The Bell companies want to target those calls in which a caller uses a pre-paid calling card and dials a toll-free number, along with his or her PIN. The caller, who may be in Virginia, for example, is connected to a “platform” in another state -- let’s say in Nebraska. From this “platform,” he or she hears a message about a company, non-profit or person. The caller then dials the telephone number of someone in Virginia. Current rules, as well as common sense, state that this represents two calls, one from Virginia to Nebraska and one from Nebraska to Virginia. Both calls are subject to interstate access charges because there is a call to Nebraska and then a separate call to Virginia.

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Prices are already rising for gas, milk and other products. Consumers don’t need higher prices for phone calls too, especially when these higher rates represent a *blatant giveaway to four large corporations*.

I am aware that the long distance companies and others that sell pre-paid calling cards have weighed in with the FCC in an effort to protect their customers’ interests in this manner. It is now time for the FCC to weigh in on the side of consumers and show the Bell companies the door on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michelle Simpson".

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

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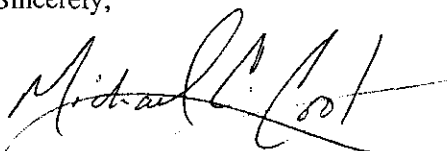
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Copps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Copps" clearly distinguishable.

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Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Patrick Myers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

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Commissioner Michael J. Copps
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Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rene Cotton". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

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Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein

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A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Stephen J. Martin, is written over the "Sincerely," and extends across the middle of the page.

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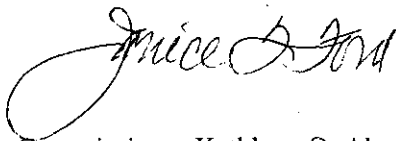
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Minorities, lower-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have the credit, bank accounts, or surplus cash to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable costs.

In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.

Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Hyman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kim" and last name "Hyman" clearly distinguishable.

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Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
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Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

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I am aware that the long distance companies and others that sell pre-paid calling cards have weighed in with the FCC in an effort to protect their customers’ interests in this manner. It is now time for the FCC to weigh in on the side of consumers and show the Bell companies the door on this issue.

Sincerely, *Dwight McFarlane*

ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mario Chavez-Vinson".

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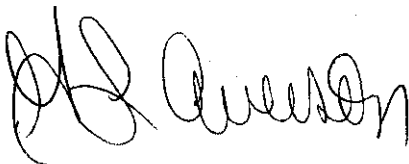
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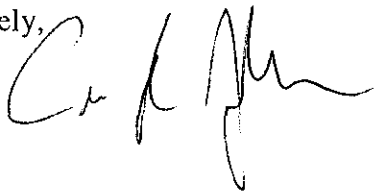
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Minorities, lower-income families, senior citizens, immigrants, college students and military families rely upon calling card services for a variety of needs. Many of these consumers do not have the credit, bank accounts, or surplus cash to pay a large deposit for local telephone service. For these consumers, a prepaid card may be the only option they have to stay connected – to make phone calls to look for a job, for affordable housing, make a doctor's appointment, or stay in touch with family and friends. These cards offer convenience and predictable costs.

In economically disadvantaged areas, consumers literally risk being disconnected if the prices of these cards increase. Prepaid calling cards are indispensable for these and other consumer groups because they are an affordable alternative to regular and wireless telephone services.

But such price hikes are precisely what the FCC will do if it inflicts new "in-state" access charges and other fees on pre-paid cards. The fees would funnel directly to large local telephone companies while the burden would fall squarely upon those consumers that can least afford to bear it. Adding access charges and fees will substantially increase the cost of providing pre-paid cards at affordable prices, jeopardizing the savings provided by these cards.

Please stop any effort to raise the costs of pre-paid calling card consumers by deciding that these services are not subject to exorbitant new access charges and other fees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael Copps", written over a horizontal line.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael Copps', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
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July 22, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
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445 12th Street, S.W.
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RE: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

Minority communities living in urban areas rely upon low-cost telephone services to accomplish many every day tasks, from looking for a job or affordable housing to staying in touch with family and friends. I am concerned that the FCC is considering new charges and fees upon pre-paid calling cards, which would raise prices for consumers nationwide.

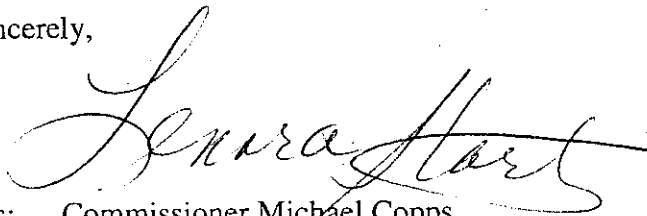
In particular, minority consumers living on fixed incomes or those without the means necessary to subscribe to local telephone service rely on prepaid calling cards to stay connected at set, affordable rates. Students, immigrants, senior citizens, military personnel, and others face similar challenges.

As a result, prepaid calling cards often are the only option available – without them, some consumers would, quite literally, be out of choices for staying connected. Raising the price of prepaid services will directly harm those that can least afford price increases.

Imposing new charges and fees would amount to a substantial increase in the per-minute cost of prepaid calls, destroying the utility of calling cards to many consumers in our community. Allowing the large, local telephone companies to collect such charges, even when they do not sell the calling card to a customer, would drive up prices and would make these services substantially less affordable.

Please look out for consumers by refusing to impose new access charges and fees on prepaid calling card services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Hart". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the distribution list.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

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445 12th Street, S.W.
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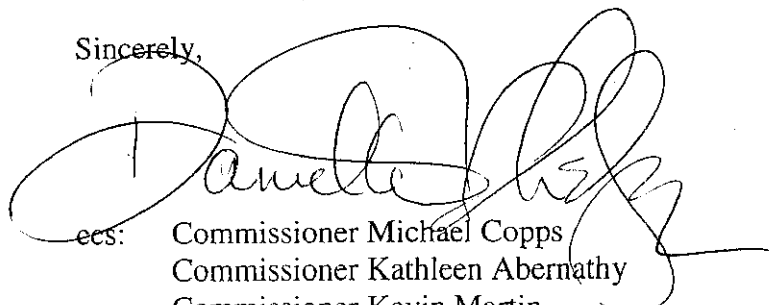
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jerry Robinson".

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

Chairman Michael Powell
Federal Communications Commission
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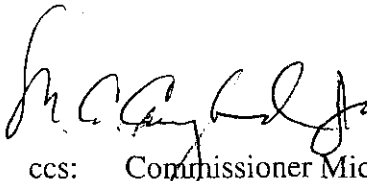
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. Copps", is written over the typed name of Commissioner Michael Copps.

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Margaret Kahet".

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

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Federal Communications Commission
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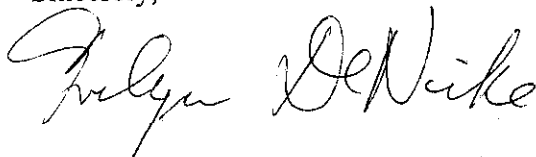
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gregory DeWine".

ccs: Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
Commissioner Kevin Martin
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein

July 22, 2004

Chairman Michael K. Powell
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 03-133

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to add my voice to the growing number of groups and individuals **opposed** to efforts by the local Bell telephone companies to circumvent current rules on calls placed with a pre-paid calling card. If they succeed, it will result in higher rates – in many cases, dramatically higher rates – for consumers who place the calls. As you approach your work on this docket, I implore you to keep the needs of consumers in mind rather than the pleadings of the four Bell companies.

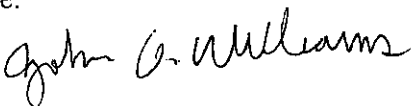
The Bell companies want to target those calls in which a caller uses a pre-paid calling card and dials a toll-free number, along with his or her PIN. The caller, who may be in Virginia, for example, is connected to a “platform” in another state – let’s say in Nebraska. From this “platform,” he or she hears a message about a company, non-profit or person. The caller then dials the telephone number of someone in Virginia. Current rules, as well as common sense, state that this represents two calls, one from Virginia to Nebraska and one from Nebraska to Virginia. Both calls are subject to interstate access charges because there is a call to Nebraska and then a separate call to Virginia.

But the Bell companies want to treat this as a single in-state call so they can levy exorbitant in-state access charges. Such fees have no relationship whatsoever to the Bell companies’ actual costs, which are only a fraction of what they want to charge consumers.

Prices are already rising for gas, milk and other products. Consumers don’t need higher prices for phone calls too, especially when these higher rates represent a blatant giveaway to four large corporations.

I am aware that the long distance companies and others that sell pre-paid calling cards have weighed in with the FCC in an effort to protect their customers’ interests in this manner. It is now time for the FCC to weigh in on the side of consumers and show the Bell companies the door on this issue.

Sincerely,



ccs: Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein